

City of Reading  
City Council  
Work Session  
Monday, June 18, 2007

**Council Members Present**

Vaughn Spencer, President  
Maria Baez  
Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz  
Stratton Marmarou  
Dennis Sterner  
Jeff Waltman

**Absent**

Stephen Fuhs

**Others Present**

L. Churchill  
C. Younger  
L. Kelleher  
T. McMahon

**Call to Order**

President of Council Vaughn Spencer called the work session to order at 7:12 pm.

**Managing Director's Report**

Managing Director Leon Churchill highlighted the report distributed to Council at the work session covering the following:

- Group Work Camp (rehabilitate and clean up 50 City homes)
- Olivet's Baseball League Season Opener at the Gordon Hoodak Stadium
- City Reading Is Fundamental program lauded in Washington DC
- Mural dedication at the Sovereign Plaza 5<sup>th</sup> & Penn Sts painted by Andrew M. Kish III

**City-Wide Diversity Board**

Mr. Churchill agreed with the principle of the City-Wide Diversity Board. He stated that the clarity in the Board's goals and priorities will eliminate any conflict with the Police and Fire Diversity Boards currently in use. He

described the work of the Administration to hire a permanent EEOC officer in the Human Resources Department.

Mr. Waltman reminded all that the Fire and Police Diversity Boards have a defined life span. He stressed the need for the City to take ownership of identifying the breakdown in employment practices, diversity recruitment, etc.

Mr. Churchill stated that this important issue could be handled by the Human Relations Commission. He noted the difficulty the City has in finding willing and capable candidates to fill the many volunteer roles existing on the City's Boards, Authorities, and Commissions.

Ms. Kelleher stated that when researching this issue she found that in many cities across the nation, this function is taken by the Human Relations area. She stated that the use of an established City Diversity Board was only located in the state of Washington and California.

Mr. Spencer and Mr. Waltman both expressed the belief that the diversity employment issue needs to be separated from the Human Relations Commission as this Commission is already overloaded.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz also agreed with the need for a separate diversity board to address employment issues.

Mr. Waltman asked that the ordinance be introduced at the June 25, 2007 regular meeting of Council.

### **Pagoda Renovations**

Mayor McMahon provided a power point presentation on the history and installation of the Pagoda on Mt. Penn. The presentation justified the removal of trees surrounding the Pagoda which has re-established the many overlooks on the Pagoda grounds. Representatives from Kautter and Kelly and Spotts, Stevens, and McCoy stated that they are currently working on a phased rehabilitation plan that will first address a modification to the main entry, repairs to the stairways and retaining walls, painting, and electric and HVAC upgrades. The Pagoda was last rehabilitated in 1992. The first phase will also include replacement of the neon lighting with LED lighting. The schematic plan will include costs estimates for each phase.

Mr. Spencer noted that the building is on the National Register of Historic Buildings and inquired if the PHMC will be consulted on the rehabilitation plans. Tim Krall from Spotts, Stevens and McCoy replied that the PHMC will be reviewing the plans; however, no major obstacles are foreseen.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with the multi-year payments and rehabilitation plan for the Pagoda. She noted the assistance provided by the "Pennies for the Pagoda" program. The "Pennies for the Pagoda" program will provide the opportunity for broad public participation in the funding and upkeep of this important regional landmark.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for the City to define the City's financial commitment to this important tourist attraction.

Mr. Marmarou agreed with the need to provide continued maintenance of the Pagoda.

Mr. Waltman expressed concern with the plan to provide lower level parking as the use of headlights during evening hours may impair the visual impact of the Pagoda. He agreed with the need to expand the use of the Pagoda and the park system running across Mt. Penn starting at Bernhart's Park and extending to the Pagoda. He also expressed his belief in the need for a regional approach to the parks system.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with the connection of the parkways starting with Bernhart's, and traveling to Egelman's, the Pagoda and Mineral Spring Park, etc.

### **Solid Waste Ordinance**

Mr. Sterner stated that the Solid Waste Ordinance has been listed as pending legislation since March 2007. He stressed the need for the enactment of this ordinance.

Mr. Spencer suggested having the Office of Neighborhood Development coordinate meetings throughout the six Council districts to educate the public on the terms of the ordinance.

Mr. Sterner suggested holding one or two centralized meetings, as multiple meetings will just attract the same special interest groups.

Ms. Baez agreed with one or two centralized meetings on the terms of the ordinance.

Mr. Waltman suggested that a Solid Waste Commission be formed to review the Solid Waste Ordinance. He stated that he would not agree to more than one centralized meeting on the Solid Waste Ordinance.

The work session was adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

---

Linda A. Kelleher, City Clerk